Okanogan Conservation District
1251 S. Second Ave, Room 102 Okanogan, WA 98840

TO: The Record
SUBJECT: July 14, 2026; Board of Supervisors Meeting
LOCATION: Okanogan Conservation District Office, Okanogan, WA and Remotely via Microsoft Teams and Teleconference
FROM: Natalie Torres, Administrative Specialist

PRESENT:
Lorah Super, Chair
Jerry Asmussen, Vice Chair
Steve Colvin, Supervisor
Phil Dart, Supervisor
Michelle Martin, Supervisor
Ivan Oberg, Associate Supervisor
Randy Kelley, Associate Supervisor
Bob Clark, Associate Supervisor
Terri Williams, Associate Supervisor
Craig Nelson, Executive Director
Jordana Ellis, Programs Director
Natalie Torres, Administrative Specialist
Emmy Engle, Communications
Emily Bustamante, Education Lead
Davis Clark, Agriculture Lead
Chevelle Yeckel, Aquatics & Habitat Lead
Brant Smith, Aquatics & Habitat Lead
Eli Loftis, Forests & Wildfire Lead
Thomas Lecicester, Range Planner
Celeste Acord, NRCS
Scott Noble, SCC
Allisa Carlson, SCC
Amber Jackson, ECY
Anne MacDonough, Public
Tree Kiesecker, Public
Ton Rietveld, Public
Julie Vanderwal, Public
Michael Ward, Public
Kate Miller, Public

<u>**Meeting Call to Order:**</u> Lorah Super called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. She completed a roll call of Supervisors, Associate Supervisors, staff, partners, and the public.

<u>**Public Comment:**</u>
Anne MacDonough – Anna shared the personal significance of Bonaparte, expressing how meaningful the property and its conservation are to her. She highlighted the importance of preserving the area and the connection it holds for the community and future generations.

Tree Kiesecker – Tree expressed her appreciation for Bonaparte and the conservation efforts surrounding the property. She emphasized the importance of protecting the area and recognizing its ecological value.

Ton Rietveld – Ton shared his personal connection to Bonaparte, describing the landscape as familiar and reminiscent of home. He expressed his appreciation for the character of the property and the importance of protecting places that hold both ecological and personal significance.

Julie Vanderwal – Julie shared additional insight on Bonaparte, emphasizing the importance of continued stewardship and protection of the property. She noted the role of wetlands in supporting conservation goals, stating that "wetlands are the new water banks," and highlighted their value in maintaining the landscape for future generations.

Michael Ward – Michael shared his perspective on Bonaparte Meadows WA, reflecting on the importance of the property and the impact its protection can have. He recognized the unique qualities of the area and the lasting benefits of conserving such a valuable landscape.

Approval of Agenda & Consent Approval:
Consent Agenda

A. May 2026 Board Meeting Minutes
B. June 2026 Special Board Meeting Minutes
C. MOU – Classroom in Bloom – Emily
D. ILA – Oroville School District – Emily
E. Word Order – Oroville School District – Emily
F. Wheatland Bank Signer Changes – Kim
G. July 2026 Treasurer's Report #878

Treasurer's Report #878, Which covers the checking account activity from June 1, 2026, to June 30, 2026, inclusive. The following checks/payroll/direct withdrawals/electronic payments were approved for payment:

The payroll deposits for this period include two direct deposits: one covering June 1-15, 2026, in the amount of $32,304.62, and another for June 16-30, 2026, totaling $31,932.38. The combined total of payroll deposits is $64,237.00.

Payroll deductions for this period amount to $39,931.95. The HCA payment check (13162) totaled $17,831.48. Altogether, the total payroll-related transactions for this period amount to $122,000.43.

Checks issued during this timeframe include numbers 13163 through 13192. The total claims for checks amount to $191,906.63. Additionally, EFT debits, general ledger adjustments, and credit card payments total $4,228.26. The combined total of claims paid or processed is $196,134.89.

Outstanding expenses remaining total $246,110.40.

The beginning balance of the checking account was $304,291.52. During this period, deposits totaling $244,266.70 were made, and reconciled withdrawals amounted to $175,768.63. After accounting for all transactions, the ending balance in the checking account is $372,789.59.

Steve Colvin made the motion to approve the Agenda and Consent Agenda. Phil Dart seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Partner Reports:
Celeste Acord – Celeste provided a brief update on current NRCS efforts, including progress toward moving EQIP and CSP applications into contracts. She also shared that additional support has been brought in through temporary and partner positions to assist with ongoing work.

Scott Noble – Scott introduced himself in person to Okanogan CD for the first time. He provided a brief update on regional activities and ongoing efforts, encouraged continued open communication, and reminded the board and staff that they are welcome to reach out with any questions.

Allisa Carlson – Allisa provided additional regional updates and shared her support as Scott transitions into his new role. She highlighted the importance of continued coordination and collaboration and encouraged the board and staff to reach out with any questions or needs for assistance.

Staff Presentation:
Chevelle presented an overview of the Aquatics & Habitat Program to the board, sharing information about current work, initiatives, and future goals.

Old Business:
Public Comment – There was no public comment.

Bonaparte Meadows – Craig requested that the board reconsider supporting the acquisition of Bonaparte Meadows Fen by the Okanogan Land Trust. He emphasized the ecological importance of the property, including its role in watershed protection, habitat preservation, and maintaining water quality and flow.
He noted that SEP funding received through the Kinross settlement was intended for projects such as this and could potentially provide up to $100,000 toward the acquisition. Craig proposed offering support to the Okanogan Land Trust while maintaining a reasonable role in future decisions regarding the property.

Board members discussed the item, asked questions, and shared feedback. The board requested that the topic be placed on the agenda for the upcoming board meeting to allow for continued discussion and consideration.

Water Bank Update – Craig presented Resolution 2026-03 regarding the Hover Water Rights Acquisition, which is needed to complete the final steps of transferring the water right into the Okanogan County Water Bank. The resolution authorizes a designated individual to sign the required documents to complete the acquisition process.

Board Governance – Finance Reports – Craig provided an update on changes made to the finance reports following discussion at the June board meeting. He requested board feedback on the revised format and whether to continue using the updated reports moving forward. A decision was requested to formally document board approval of the new format, or to defer action for further review if additional changes are desired.

Board Expertise & Interests Matrix – Craig asked board members to complete the Board Expertise and Interests Matrix to help inform committee appointments, staff outreach, and communication efforts. He noted that this item does not require board action or approval but will require time from each supervisor to complete.

Succession Planning – Craig introduced two proposed succession plans for initial board feedback at the July meeting. He noted that the plans address succession for board supervisors and the Executive Director. The documents will also be reviewed by Kim and Jordana for additional input.

Board Ethics and Code of Conduct – Craig introduced a new policy for initial board feedback at the July meeting. He noted that the policy is intended to establish shared standards for board members to help maintain the district's integrity and reputation as a trusted organization. The policy will also be reviewed by Kim and Jordana for additional input.

Conflict of Interest - Craig introduced a new Conflict of Interest Policy for initial board feedback. He noted that the policy is intended to help define conflicts of interest for board members and establish how they should be addressed. The policy will also be reviewed by Kim and Jordana for additional input.

<u>New Business:</u>
Public Comment – There was no public comment.

Strategic Planning – Craig introduced the process for developing the next strategic plan, which is intended to take effect January 1, 2027, ahead of the current plan's expiration. He asked board members to review the kickoff guide and provide input on priorities and ideas. Staff will use the board's feedback to begin developing the plan framework, including goals, strategies, measures of success, and resource needs.

District Reports: Supervisor Reports

Phil Dart – Phil shared that the past two months have made for an interesting summer, with conditions changing quickly from wet to dry. Water is being hauled to livestock, and the Department of Ecology recently conducted its first visit in 15 years. Second cut is nearly complete and expected to finish this week. He emphasized that fire danger cannot be ignored, noting a recent house fire and that even green grass is burning. He remarked that 2015 may seem mild compared to this year, with continued hot, dry, windy conditions and dry lightning expected throughout the summer.

Steve Colvin – Steve announced that the winery, Esther Bricues, will host a dinner and concert featuring a live band on August 2nd. The proceeds will go to the band, with a goal of hosting 100 attendees. Approximately 50 RSVPs have been received to date, and all are welcome to attend.

Michelle Martin – Michelle shared that she is interested in observing the impacts of the TU Enloe project on local species and habitat, particularly what conditions will encourage wildlife to establish and use the area as habitat.

Jerry Asmussen – Jerry shared that he is beginning to see large grasshopper swarms. He also noted that many homeowners are struggling to keep up with irrigation demands.

Lorah Super – Lorah shared that the Methow has had a slight amount of humidity, with cloudy mornings most days. She noted that she completed additional maintenance work and finished mowing at French Creek. She said she feels good about conditions in that area but acknowledged that it is now fire season.

Associate Supervisor Reports

Ivan Oberg – Ivan shared that a new earthworm species, the jumping earthworm, may be making its way into the area. He noted that these worms are commonly found near oak and walnut trees in the eastern U.S. and can impact existing worm populations. He added that their effects and control methods are still being studied.

Staff Reports

Craig Nelson – Craig shared an update regarding a lawsuit involving Calum CD and noted potential impacts for conservation districts and related entities if the outcome results in changes to Rates & Charges requirements. He also shared that new hires, Davis and Rowan, have joined the district.

Craig reported vehicle damage updates, noting that the Compass is considered a total loss and the Silverado sustained damage while in the field.

Eli Loftis – Eli shared that multiple fires have occurred and the district is beginning post-fire assistance efforts through the WISSRI grant.

Emmy – Emmy informed the board that she may be present at next month's meeting, depending on the timing of her baby's arrival.

Lorah Super adjourned the meeting at 9:20 PM.

Summary of Motions

Steve Colvin made the motion to approve the Agenda and Consent Agenda. Phil Dart seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

9/8/2026		9.8.26	
Lorah Super	Date	Natalie Torres	Date
Chair		Administrative Specialist	